



Afghan Army receives field sanitation training

Story and photos by
U.S. Army National Guard
Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis
OMC-A Public Affairs Office

GHAZNI, Afghanistan — On a hot and exhausting day, there's nothing better than a nice, cool drink of water. For soldiers of the Afghan National Army conducting operations throughout their country, water is not only nice, it's a necessity. But, in a difficult environment such as that found here, understanding and applying appropriate field sanitation measures can mean the difference between enhancing or degrading a unit's combat effectiveness.

On April 14, Sgt 1st Class Terrill Jones, the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan's Food Service Advisor to the ANA, conducted a comprehensive field sanitation training class for the 2nd Kandak (Battalion), 1st Brigade of the 203rd Corps, located in the country's Ghazni Province.

According to Jones, an Oklahoma Army National Guardsman, "although this type of training is essential at every location where the ANA is based, Ghazni was selected first due to severe flooding that occurred here when a dam recently burst. The flooding contaminated most of the drinking water." Jones added that Coalition and ANA forces were also involved with the evacuation of villagers from areas downstream of the dam.

Because drinking the right



Sgt 1st Class Terrill Jones, the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan's Food Service Advisor to the Afghan National Army, and interpreter Mahmood Barekzai conduct field sanitation training for Afghan National Army soldiers in the country's Ghazni Province. Here, Jones explains the proper amount of chlorine to add to drinking water in order to kill bacteria.

quantity and quality of water is essential for all soldiers in Afghanistan and personal hygiene is imperative to control the spread of bacteria and viruses, Jones' class

are happy to receive this training on water purifying and personal hygiene to help prevent bacterial spread. In the future, we will be better able to protect our soldiers," said Lt. Col.

Mahmmood Kamal, the Kandak's executive officer.

According to U.S. medical personnel assigned to Afghanistan, 3 to 4 percent of the deaths that occur in this country are due to kidney failure associated

"It is our job to keep the soldiers safe so that they can continue to provide peace and security for the Afghan people."

-- Command Sgt. Maj. Roidar Huosan, Kandak CSM

focused on disease control measures, including food preparation, personal hygiene, vector control and water purification.

The Afghan soldiers found the training to be very worthwhile. "We

with an inadequate quantity or quality of drinking water. Many communicable diseases, including diarrhea, cholera and other disorders, can result from water-borne viruses found in substandard drinking water.

During water purification training, the ANA soldiers learned to sterilize water using the chlorination method. Chlorine is a very common disinfectant and is effective for killing most pathogenic bacteria and viruses.


The training was of obvious importance to Command Sgt. Major Roidar Huosan, the kandak's senior noncommissioned officer. "It is my duty to enforce these new safety procedures. The soldiers need this training to protect themselves,"

declared Huosan. "These soldiers are like my family, and I will do everything to protect them."

In addition to conducting his training course, Jones provided the kandak leadership with personal hygiene posters and fliers to display around their base.

"These were the soldiers who helped the people of Ghazni during the floods," said Huosan, describing the troops who participated in the day's training.

"They provided security for the 2,000 shops that were destroyed, they provided rescue for people trapped in the water that could not swim, and they escorted the people to hospitals and got them to safe places.

"It was another chance for the Afghan National Army to make the people of our country happy to have the ANA. It is our job to keep the soldiers safe so that they can continue to provide peace and security for the Afghan people." 

Right: Command Sgt. Maj. Roidar Huosan, of the Afghan National Army's 2nd Kandak (Battalion), 1st Brigade, 203rd Corps, pours the proper amount of chlorine into a container holding drinking water at the unit's base camp in Ghazni Province as one of his senior noncommissioned officers pre-pares the next bottle. The water purification exercise was part of a field sanitation training class for the kandak's soldiers.



Left: Afghan National Army Lt. Col. Mahmmood Kamal, executive officer for the 2nd Kandak (Battalion), 1st Brigade, 203rd Corps, reviews his unit's water purification information following a field sanitation training class. The ANA soldiers based in Ghazni Province were selected to receive the training after severe flooding contaminated most of the drinking water in their area.